



## **Rebuild Iowa Task Force Cultural Heritage Meeting Notes**

Governor Chet Culver  
Lt. Governor Patty Judge, RIO Executive Director

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**October 20, 2008 – 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Iowa Department for the Blind  
Assembly Room, 524 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50309**

### **Task Force Members Present:**

Karris Golden, Waterloo, Task Force Chair  
Arbe Bareis, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids  
Doug Elliott, East Central Iowa Council of Governments, Cedar Rapids  
Jason Follett, State Historical Society, Ankeny  
Scott Herbert, Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids  
Senator Wally Horn, Iowa General Assembly, Cedar Rapids  
Rose Middleton, John Deere Foundation, Waterloo  
Sue Olson, Czech and Slovak Museum, Cedar Rapids  
Cyndi Peterson, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Des Moines  
Timothy Weitzel, Historic Preservation Photo Database, Des Moines  
Inkyung Westfall, City of Council Bluffs, Council Bluffs  
Sandra Yoder, Iowa Museum Association, West Des Moines

### **Resource Group Members Present:**

Gordon Hendrickson, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Des Moines  
Nancy Kraft, The University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City  
Brooke Miller, African American Museum, Cedar Rapids  
Ned Ratekin, Cedar Falls Historical Society, Cedar Falls  
Ryan Russell, Limolink Inc., Cedar Rapids  
Jerome Thompson, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Des Moines

### **Staff:**

Aaron Todd, RIO  
Ben Banowetz, SPPG  
Brooke Findley, SPPG  
Michelle Rich, SPPG

### **Welcome and Opening Comments**

Karris Golden thanked Task Force and Resource Group members for returning for another meeting of the Cultural Heritage Task Force. The Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission (RIAC) has met twice since the 45-Day Report was submitted to the Governor. The process for the Task Forces and the 120-Day Report was explained. Golden noted the work that was put in to the 45-Day Report of the Commission and thanked the Task Force again for their hard work in the consensus process.

Golden acknowledged the interest of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission in the recommendations and strategies developed by the Cultural Heritage and Records Retention Task Force. The goals for the day were outlined. Responsibilities of the Task Force include developing a long-term vision, and recommendations and strategies to achieve that long-term vision.

### **Member News and Updates From Around the State**

Ryan Russell of Cedar Rapids noted the challenges Cedar Rapids has faced in rebuilding. The Czech Village is a good example of these challenges.

Ned Ratekin of Cedar Falls explained their damages. The largest cultural impact in Cedar Falls is the Icehouse Museum. The Museum has looked upon this devastation as an opportunity to redesign and reconstruct, and the Museum has just started this phase.

Sandi Yoder of the Iowa Museum Association updated the Task Force on the Association's annual meeting that took place a week and a half ago. Yoder explained that many issues had come up during recovery. Many museums, like the Icehouse Museum, are seeing this as an opportunity to rebuild smartly, for example, including emergency response in museum plans. The Association has taken in some donations, as well. Many other state museum associations have been offering to help. Also, several museums have found ways to keep themselves in the public eye, including traveling exhibits.

Jason Follett of the State Historical Society updated the group on the Society's September meeting. The Society looked at some of the things the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and RIAC has looked at. The Society will meet next in Waverly for its November meeting. Follett shared that the Society is hoping to get a look at some of the cultural damage at that meeting.

Arbe Bareis shared with the group the hope that Cedar Rapids would be rebuilt.

Inky Westfall of Council Bluffs noted that their damage was not as tremendous as some communities, but it has given the city an opportunity to take a different look at its planning.

Rose Middleton updated the group on damages impacting the Cedar Valley cultural community. It suffered extensive damage, and area leaders had thought they were well prepared because of updated disaster plans developed in response to the floods of 1993.

Sue Olson of Cedar Rapids provided an update on the community's response thus far. The City of Cedar Rapids has contracted with a cultural arts professional to serve as a liaison between the City and the community's cultural institutions. This liaison knows the community and has already received feedback. The city's performing arts institutions have started conversations on co-location and area museums have started similar conversations. At the end of this week these two groups will meet to talk about how museums and performing arts can work together. Olsen noted that there is a close tie between the cultural community and economic development. In various ways people have asked what the Cedar Rapids cultural community needs in order to recover. The cultural community probably needs more emphasis on best practices and good administrative practices. Also, accountability needs to be stressed. Finally, Olson stated that cultural organizations should be working more closely with municipal government and the state legislature.

Wally Horn, State Senator from Cedar Rapids, voiced frustration with the slow progress in Cedar Rapids. Everything has been impacted in the community, but where does the city start to

rebuild? Senator Horn noted that without response soon, the city may lose very important elements, including cultural institutions. Due to funding timelines, no decisions have been made as to where some organizations can rebuild and the process has been significantly slowed. Cedar Rapids has homes completely stripped and still waiting for permits and funds to begin rebuilding. A special legislative session will not help matters because rebuilding is waiting on the City Council to receive information from higher-up. The Legislature cannot receive any guidance from the City Council yet. They do not know what they need, so the Legislature will not be able to help them.

Nancy Kraft of The University of Iowa Libraries shared with the Task Force that she is currently working with the Iowa Preservation and Conservation Consortium to write a grant for a statewide disaster response plan. The grant deadline has been extended, which has helped significantly. Kraft noted that she resides in Cedar Rapids and coordinated the disaster “muck-out” response to the African American Museum and the National Czech and Slovak Museum. The University of Iowa Libraries has been cleaning materials from these institutions damaged from the flood. The frozen materials came back this week, so the Libraries have a lot of work ahead. The staff has mostly had success salvaging the materials. Kraft expressed that she was very impressed with Cedar Rapids’ cultural institutions. Cedar Rapids just put on a symphony show on the front lawn of Brucemore. These institutions are being very creative in getting out in the community. Kraft stated that with these new locations of operation for cultural institutions, such as the mall, these institutions will gain new audiences. For instance, The University of Iowa used the library for a meeting place, and these students and staff will probably come back.

Gordon Hendrickson of the Department of Cultural Affairs reminded the group that the Task Force had the opportunity to recommend systemic change. Hendrickson noted that many historical buildings had been impacted by the disasters. For instance, Legion Arts functions in an historic building. This organization could move anywhere and function as Legion Arts, but it would not be the same. This Task Force should place priority on protecting this historic fabric that is very much in danger. The Task Force must also remember that in developing any plans that involve the historical and cultural community and federal dollars, permits, and licensing, historical evaluation must be included in the process. For instance, the levee planning in Cedar Rapids needs to be assessed according to the historical impact of building this structure. The Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission needs to ensure that the Historical Society is brought in early during these planning processes. If the Society is brought in after a levee plan is determined, then the Society is forced to backpedal in order to make these assessments. In such cases the Society is accused of throwing up roadblocks to the entire project, when it is just trying to ensure that historical resources in the communities are preserved. Federal agencies also need to be involved in this.

Golden thanked everyone for the updates. She asked the group to focus on building on what the group discussed at the last Task Force meeting.

### **Progress Reports – Presentation and Discussion**

Findley explained that the focus of today’s discussion is on what needs to happen in order to recover safer, stronger, and smarter in the long term.

Todd updated the group on Rebuild Iowa Office activities. Todd reviewed the Commission’s vision: A resilient Iowa that will be safe, sustainable and economically strong, reaffirming its ties to the land, rivers, environment, and rich cultural history. The Rebuild Iowa Office is working closely with ESF 14 in 10 communities statewide: Oakville, Iowa City, Coralville, Cedar Rapids, Palo, Cedar Falls, Waterloo, Waverly, New Hartford, and Parkersburg. Culture has been at the

table at all these discussions. Three communities are going through an intensive process. Julie Struck of RIO is working with case management organizations called Long-term Recovery Committees. The lead agency, the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council (DHRC), is a coalition of organizations that provides structure to help communities and individuals recover from disasters and help with preparedness planning and long-term recovery. This council acts as the statewide volunteer response organization. If Iowa did not have this entity, the state would be served only by the general FEMA structure. There are currently 13 committees providing assistance to families and communities, and another 10 communities are being served directly by the DHRC.

More than 1,500 infrastructure projects, totaling more than \$300 million, have been approved. Levies are being built, and water and sewage treatment projects are being repaired. Iowa saved \$150 million in state funds by showing the federal government the state's significant need and thus achieving a 90/10 federal to state match. More than 3,000 small business loans have been approved to date for a total of \$230 million. Through Department of Labor grants the state of Iowa has helped 10,000 people by extending unemployment insurance at no cost to any Iowa employer. A total of \$1.1 billion has been dedicated statewide to begin the rebuilding process. Iowa now has \$85 million available from federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in addition to the \$40 million dedicated to the Jumpstart program. There is also another round of funding coming from HUD shortly. In addition, a \$23 billion package was passed the week of October 1 by Congress that will help states facing daunting disaster recovery.

There are three housing assistance programs available through the Jumpstart program. To qualify, homeowners must be registered with FEMA. The maximum award is \$72,000 and all loans are forgivable over 10 years. Regional Councils of Government and Entitlement Cities are distributing program funds locally.

Businesses and nonprofits are eligible for a forgivable loan of up to \$55,000 so long as the entity re-opens within one year of receiving the loan. Eligible businesses and nonprofits are those that sustained physical damage or economic loss as a result of the disasters. Entities must have been approved for an SBA loan or other private loan, and are eligible for the lesser of up to 25% of that loan amount or \$50,000. An additional \$5,000 is available to cover costs associated with the purchase and installation of eligible energy efficiency improvements.

Elliott specified that small businesses must only be qualified for an SBA or other private loan to be eligible for the Jumpstart Small Business Program.

Todd noted that some Councils of Government and Entitlement Cities have allocated all current monies, but all applications will continue to be accepted. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds will fill in those gaps, however, CDBG funds have more strings attached, such as environmental reviews and income limits.

Pederson provided an update on activities of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). Pederson thanked Golden for her Task Force editorial that ran in the *Des Moines Register*. The DCA is not a regulatory agency, so institutions are not required to report to DCA. The Department is compiling the data it is receiving, but it is not a comprehensive report. However, the information does provide some information on damage and impact on cultural institutions. DCA is providing direct assistance as much as possible. This includes distributing funds through existing programs and working with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to provide relief funds statewide to cover impacts from disasters. The DCA received an additional \$100,000 from

the NEA for this relief program. Seventy-seven grants have been made by the Iowa Arts Council to applicants in twenty communities statewide, and all funds have been distributed.

Many cultural organizations seem to be finding their way back to operation by implementing creative projects such as the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, which is currently showing a photo exhibit of *Gazette* photographs of the flooding. The African American Museum and Cultural Center is continuing its programming throughout the state even without a permanent home base. Also, Ushers Ferry in Cedar Rapids is currently exploring ways to bring its historical programming to constituents through other venues.

On the historical side of the DCA, funds were made available for emergency grants for the care of museum and documentary collections through the Historical Resource Development Program. Applicants received assistance with the recovery of historical documents and collections. Approximately \$45,000 has been distributed to date and additional applications are expected in the coming months. The DCA has also designed a special emergency grant program for the state's Historic Site Preservation Grant program to assist with the stabilization of historic properties. This program is currently limited by appropriation language requiring the award of no more than two grants per county. The Department has asked for flexibility in application of this requirement.

The Department continues to provide technical assistance to property owners, cultural organizations, and individual artists. Staff from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have been traveling to provide workshops and assistance in many parts of the state. The Department has been especially concerned about getting good technical assistance to Cedar Rapids and Linn County. Several workshops have been presented in the area, and the Department continues to work with local officials in Cedar Rapids to consult on recovery projects and to provide technical advice to individual property owners.

The DCA will be participating in the RIO-sponsored conference in Coralville this December as moderator of a session on learning from the disasters and also in presiding over a session with the National Trust on impact of the disasters on historic resources. The DCA is also helping to plan Harvesting Resources conferences in Mason City on October 31<sup>st</sup> and Mount Pleasant on November 14<sup>th</sup> of this year. These events are being organized through the Iowa Rural Development Council to help bring needed resource providers to impacted areas. In addition, the DCA has scheduled four intensive workshops for 2009 to discuss the full range of SHPO programs and technical support.

The State Curator, Jerome Thompson, continues to provide one-on-one technical assistance to constituents in all parts of the state. His work includes providing direct advice on handling of damaged artifacts and collections.

The State Historical Society of Iowa is working with the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium (ICPC) to secure funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to develop a preservation plan for collections in the state. This will involve a survey of collections and assistance with the development of disaster preparedness plans for cultural organizations. The DCA hopes to be able to accomplish geo-mapping of cultural resources in the state to assist local emergency management offices with the protection of cultural resources in the future.

The State Archives and Records Program is working with the Council of State Archivists to implement the Intergovernmental Preservation of Essential Records (IPER) training program in

Iowa. This program will provide training to local government officials to augment their disaster preparedness plans especially as they relate to vital operating records.

There has been a significant increase in demand for technical assistance and other funds, and unfortunately the DCA does not have the capacity to meet this demand with current resources. The state must start doing something, or it may fall too far behind. Pederson explained the idea of a creative apprenticeship program between cultural institutions and the prisons. The state must be creative and work fast to create solutions. For instance, the proposed mitigation plan in Cedar Rapids may dispose of historical resources such as an historical bank that is an important building culturally. Culture and historic preservation officials need to be at the table for these conversations.

### **Task Force Issues Review**

Findley reviewed the recommendations from the last Cultural Heritage Task Force meeting. Findley reviewed the RIAC's recommendations in their 45-Day Report. Findley made it clear that this meeting of the Task Force is meant to provide visionary recommendations and strategies for long-term recovery.

### **Identify Priority Issues for Achieving Long Term Recovery**

The Task Force discussed the need for cultural institutions to be recognized as an integral component of disaster recovery, and in the broader community, in general. Cultural heritage must be considered an integral component to quality of life in Iowa's communities. Cultural institutions should be considered alongside small business as important to recovery: small business is usually noted, while cultural institutions do not get mentioned. A member of the Task Force also added that when cultural institutions are considered, it is important to think about culture in the broad, holistic sense; cultural institutions must also include historic sites and libraries.

Emergency plans were discussed. Many cultural entities do not have time during emergencies to find disaster response resources. If there is no electricity or Internet access, there is no ability to find resources readily or easily. The Task Force believed that a cultural resource directory that would serve as a single access point to a response system and on-the-ground disaster assistance were very important to cultural institutions' recovery from disasters. It was suggested that the Department of Cultural Affairs be provided the resources to serve as a single access point for disaster response.

The Task Force also discussed coordinating cultural heritage with county emergency response plans. A Task Force member suggested that cultural heritage should be considered a specific line item in budgets related to emergency response or recovery.

The need for a reliable inventory of cultural resources was noted by Task Force members. A comprehensive inventory of preservation properties and collections, for instance, needs to be developed to provide a better picture of the items or properties that need response resources. With such an inventory, potential areas of impact could be identified for better response and recovery. It was suggested that an emergency response communication plan be tied to this inventory.

Emergency response teams were also suggested as important for cultural institutions' emergency response and recovery. Over time, volunteers should be trained to be able to respond immediately and appropriately to emergencies. These volunteers could be provided through a creative partnership between several cultural organizations and agencies, such as

DCA and Iowa Museum Association. The Task Force noted that this training should be continuous, not just undertaken to respond to this year's disasters. This initiative should be provided sufficient resources to continue trainings and mobilization.

The Task Force discussed cultural institutions' important place in the economic vitality of Iowa's communities. A report from the City of Cedar Rapids listed impact on cultural institutions but separate from small business. These institutions should not be considered distinct; they are just as important to the economic development of a community.

Golden noted that in the RIAC discussions she intentionally linked the work of this Task Force with that of the Economic Development Task Force. This link is integral to the success of the Task Force. Golden explained that the Commission needed concrete examples of how cultural institutions benefit Iowa and its citizens. Iowa is a state that underfunded the Arts prior to the disasters, so the Task Force must state explicitly how the economic vitality of the state relies on cultural organizations.

A Task Force member noted the impact on tourism experienced as a result of the disasters. This is evidence of the importance of cultural institutions to the state. People come to Iowa and travel within the state to visit the state's cultural institutions, and this has an impact on restaurants and hotels and other traditional businesses. There is quantifiable data on funds generated by looking at these institutions and organizations up and running at this time.

The Task Force discussed the importance of conserving historical buildings. It was noted that the ultimate "green building" was conserving historical properties and buildings. Rebuilding in historic buildings, including developing low-income housing, is one of the most cost-effective means of development. A Task Force member noted the need for mixed housing, not only low-income. It was also noted that historical buildings and properties are also tourist attractions in many communities, and draw visitors from all over the world.

Findley provided a review of the priorities discussed by the Task Force before breaking for lunch.

- Recognize the value of cultural arts and tie to economic development and other Task Force issue areas
- Mapping of state watersheds
- Work with emergency management on cultural arts response to mitigate impacts before disasters
- Create handbook of FAQs for cultural arts
- Line item budget at local level for cultural arts
- Geo-mapping and inventory of cultural arts resources and use for marketing strategies
- Develop emergency response teams for cultural arts response
- Investment versus donations
- Fund response teams
- State inventory for economic impact projections
- Investment strategies, including green rebuilding
- Integration into county and city plans and response

Break for lunch.

## **Strategies to Accomplish Long Term Recovery**

Findley asked the group to begin brainstorming about strategies under the following four issue areas:

- Cultural Heritage Communication and Education
- Economic Community and Workforce Development
- Infrastructure Sighting and Planning
- Emergency Planning and Response

Findley reminded the group that this visionary thinking needs to be focused long term for 10 to 20 years into the future. Other issues to keep in mind are rural versus urban and the many different types of disasters that the state may experience in the long term.

### **Emergency Planning and Response**

- Cultural arts need to maintain a place at the table for county and city emergency planning. It was noted that culture is a required component to such plans, but that emergency managers often do not know who should represent the cultural sector, or whom to contact to name such a representative.
- Geo-mapping needs to occur at the institution level.
- The state should train volunteer flood fighters. Like volunteer firefighters, these people would have expertise that would be a resource for local fire and police. This volunteer work would be physical, but should be volunteer. This system could be used intra-regionally.
- Cultural emergency response teams – resources should be designated for training and resources for such response teams that would be deployed statewide. One phone call would set in motion cultural disaster response. Inter-state response could be initiated through cultural compacts. For instance, if paper conservators were needed, institutions or individuals could call another state and the compacts would allow for the sharing of resources.
- Pre-positioning disaster response resources by using National Guard Armories to hold resources in preparation for disaster. Inventory would be made public for reference in time of need.
- A compilation of resources available at time of disaster or emergency, a “phonebook” of cultural resources.
- Cultural planner on staff at HSEMD.
- One application form for all relief programs including FEMA, SBA, and others.

### **Infrastructure Siting and Planning**

- Hazard mitigation planning would deal with existing assets and protecting them and protecting future assets. Cultural institutions should be a part of hazard mitigation planning.
- The time between impact and historic preservation consultation is minimized when federal dollars are involved. Historic preservation consultation should be required for state grant dollars, as well. For instance, if a Department of Natural Resources grant looks to rebuild a waterway, currently there is no requirement to consult with the Historical Society. It was noted that although state Code requires state agencies to consult with the Historical Society, it is not the reality in all cases. The Task Force recommends that the state should require consultation with DCA for all state-funded projects through a formal mechanism. A Task Force member suggested using the language “consideration should be given to the cultural impact of projects.”
- Require minimum standards for a statewide comprehensive land-use plan.



- Recommend floodplain mapping for the state of Iowa. Historical resources should not be located within floodplains. Entities should not be required to move existing buildings or collections, but new projects should not be initiated in a floodplain.
- Explore innovative ways to get cultural workers and artists to contribute to the recovery efforts.
- Considerations of the cultural arts when making infrastructure improvements. It was suggested that a percentage of state funds designated for disaster recovery infrastructure rebuilding should be allotted for cultural arts improvements, such as investing in art for facilities. It was noted that the Arts Council has money to allot to arts and cultural organizations or cultural arts improvements.

#### Cultural Heritage Communication and Education

- Small, volunteer-operated historical societies need training in identifying and inventorying their collections to know what to save in the time of disasters. This training should be ongoing and comprehensive. Inventory should be undertaken first, and then individuals and institutions should be trained on how to save their inventory.
- Certification for museums, including inventory and preservation. A curriculum should be developed and individuals would be re-certified every three years.
- Every four years DCA assembles a Cultural Caucus. This could be used to educate and communicate to people the issues that must be addressed, including inventory and preservation. The Cultural Caucus is a gathering of delegates from the CHAT (Cultural, History, Arts Teams) regions. Every CHAT region has an assigned leader and these people could be used as the first point of contact in training and education.
- Social marketing is needed to change the public's perception of what "microenterprise" includes. Cultural organizations will be valued more when people understand that these entities are a vital piece of communities' economies.
- Online tools for people and organizations to use for emergency response, including burst pipes in winter and mold issues.
- Ongoing education for cultural professionals provided by community colleges. Professionals may latch onto this very easily. Training needs to be provided in specific, technical areas, as well as training volunteers to serve in cultural organizations.

#### Economic Community and Workforce Development

- Consider green technologies and practices when possible. It was noted that the greenest building is renovating a historic building.
- Demonstrate the economic impact of cultural institutions. Document the long-term impact of cultural institutions on economic development. Expand statewide.
- Create a cultural arts "rainy day" emergency operations fund. Such a fund could include an employee-sharing program.
- Separate nonprofit from "non-essential." Educate people on what it means to be a nonprofit organization.
- Work with non-traditional employees such as prison industries.
- Any planning by Iowa Workforce Development should include cultural workers and the cultural industry.
- Creation of Works Progress Administration-style economic program for cultural organizations and workers. This recognizes the need to keep cultural workers in the state. Artists should be utilized in rebuilding and recovery efforts and general infrastructure improvements.
- A communication mechanism other than electronic needs to be developed.

It was noted that the CHAT infrastructure is ever evolving. Once this network has matured, the structure may be an option to build upon for many of the Task Force's proposed strategies.

#### **Vision for Recovery: Task Force Role**

Findley explained the next steps for the Task Force's work. The day's notes will be finalized and a cumulative Task Force Report will be presented to the Commission. The RIAC will deliberate to develop recommendations for a 120-Day Report to Governor Culver by November 17.

#### **Final Comments**

Golden shared that a Disaster Recovery Conference will be held in Coralville on December 9 and 10. The Rebuild Iowa Office will sponsor the conference.

Golden thanked Task Force and Resource Group members for their hard work. Golden ensured the Task Force that their discussions will be taken to the Commission in whole and the integrity of their recommendations will be maintained. The group will be asked for their comments on the notes to ensure that the discussion is accurately reflected.